GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1549
ANSWERED ON:26.07.2016
Pollutants in Air
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Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has detected the smallest and the least visible pollutant particles in air in major cities;
(b) if so, the details thereof;
(c) whether such pollutant particles are causing lung cancer and cardiac ailments and if so, the details thereof; and
(d) the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to check it?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

(SHRI ANIL MADHAV DAVE)

(a) & (b) The total Suspended Particulate Matter (SPM) in ambient air is comprised of PM10 (particulate matter less than 10 micron), PM2.5 (particulate matter less than 2.5 micron) and PM1 (particulate matter less than 1 micron). The least visible particulate matter i.e. PM1 is significantly smaller than PM2.5 is not monitored by Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) as the same is not regulated. CPCB is in the process of planning to undertake monitoring of PM1 initially with certain locations in Delhi and other major cities of the country and for this purpose CPCB is studying all aspects of Monitoring of PM1 including technology and international monitoring protocols. Presently, CPCB in association with State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs) / Pollution Control Committees (PCCs) and National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI) is monitoring ambient air quality at 621 monitoring stations located in 262 cities/towns in 29 states and 5 union territories across the country under National Air Quality Monitoring Programme (NAMP). Earlier, dust in ambient air was being monitored as SPM (particulate matter less than 100 micron) and PM10 but now PM10 at all locations and PM2.5 at select locations are being monitered.

(c) No peer reviewed conclusive study report is available directly linking pollutants with the lung cancer and cardiac ailments. However, the air pollution is known to be one of the aggravating factors for many respiratory ailments and cardiovascular diseases. Other factors are inhaling/ingestion of bacteria, virus, mites, moulds, fungi, spores, pollen grains etc.

(d) The major steps being taken by the Government to check air pollution in cities inter alia include the following:-
(i) Notification of National Ambient Air Quality Standards;
(ii) Formulation of environmental regulations / statutes;
(iii) Setting up of monitoring network for assessment of ambient air quality;
(iv) Introduction of cleaner / alternate fuels like gaseous fuel (CNG, LPG etc.), ethanol blend etc.;
(v) Promotion of cleaner production processes.
(vi) Launching of National Air Quality index by the Prime Minister in April, 2015;
(vii) Implementation of Bharat Stage IV (BS-IV) norms in 63 selected cities and universalization of BS-IV by 2017;
(viii) Decision taken to leapfrog directly from BS-IV to BS-VI fuel standards by 1st April, 2020;
(ix) Taxing polluting vehicles and incentivizing hybrid and electric vehicles;
(x) Comprehensive amendments to various Waste Management Rules including Municipal Solid Waste, Plastic Waste, Hazardous Waste, Bio-medical Waste and Electronic Waste notified;
(xi) Notification of Construction and Demolition Waste Management Rules;
(xii) Ban on burning of leaves, biomass, municipal solid waste;
(xiii) Promotion of public transport network of metro, buses, e-rickshaws and promotion of car pooling, Pollution Under Control, lane discipline, vehicle maintenance;
(xiv) Revision of existing environmental standards and formulation of new standards for prevention and control of pollution from industries;
(xv) Regular co-ordination meetings at official and ministerial level with Delhi and other State Governments within the NCR;
(xvi) Issuance of directions under Section 5 of Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 and under Section 18(1)(b) of Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 and Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 for prevention of pollution;
(xvii) Installation of on-line continuous (24x7) monitoring devices by major industries.

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